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Moynihan's turning the wrong faucet

Sen. Pat Moynihan offered the Senate last week a fond farewell as a member for eight years of its Select Intelligence Committee.

It is a committee which he has served with diligence and distinction. All the more perplexing, then, that he chose not to offer proposals for its much-needed reform by reducing its leak-prone staff.

There is clearly no need for the Senate committee to have 40 staff members when the House committee can get by with seven.

Instead, Moynihan raised the familiar theme that the CIA did not inform the House and Senate committees of its aid to Nicaraguan democratic rebels mining Nicaragua's harbors last year.

In fact, both committees were

briefed by CIA Director William Casey and his aides. All House members understood what they were told but — as an angry letter by Sen. Goldwater revealed when it was "leaked" by a staff committee member — some Senate members did not.

Moynihan revealed in his farewell that CIA representatives later sought the disciplining of a committee staff member — presumably the source of the Goldwater letter.

A "grievous thing," laments Moynihan, that after eight years in which the CIA has offered its "honest counsel" to the two committees an attempt should have been made to "silence that counsel."

It is not the counsel, Senator, it is the leaks.